

Rhode Island Department of Health

Lead Screening and Referral Guidelines

Universal Blood Lead Screening

Screen all children under 6 years of age (9 months–71 months) for lead poisoning at least once annually.

- More frequent screening may be justified based on answers to the **Risk Assessment Questionnaire** (below) or if an elevated lead level is found.
- Blood lead testing may be discontinued after 3 years of age ONLY if:
 - All prior tests during the FIRST 36 months were < 15 µg/dL; and,
 - The child’s FIRST test after 36 months of age was < 15 µg/dL; and,
 - The child has not moved to a new home; and,
 - The child’s home has not undergone renovations; and,
 - The Risk Assessment Questionnaire is administered to parent/guardian and all responses are “No”.

Note: Children who are developmentally delayed should receive blood lead screening tests at intervals appropriate for their developmental age.

Risk Assessment Questionnaire

The following questionnaire should be used at each routine office visit to assess the potential for lead exposure and to identify children who should receive blood lead screening. Any positive response indicates high-risk status.

- Does your child live in or regularly visit a house with peeling or chipping paint built before 1950 (day-care center, pre-school, home of babysitter, friend, or relative)?
- Does your child live in or regularly visit a house built before 1978 with recent or ongoing renovations or remodeling (within the last 6 months)?
- Does your child have a brother, sister, housemate, or playmate who has or did have lead poisoning?
- Does your child live near an active smelter, battery recycling plant, or other industry likely to release lead?
- Does your child live with an adult whose job (i.e. construction, painting) or hobby (i.e. pottery, stained glass, furniture refinishing, automotive bodywork and boat refinishing) involves exposure to lead?

Pediatric Blood Lead Screening Guidelines

Capillary Screening

Capillary Blood Lead Level (BLL)	Recommended Actions for Primary Care Provider
< 10 µg/dL	Acceptable level. No confirmation needed.
10-19 µg/dL	Repeat venous blood lead test in 3 months.
20-44 µg/dL	Confirm with venous blood lead level within 1 week.
≥ 45 µg/dL	Confirm with venous blood lead level within 48 hours.

Venous Screening

Venous Blood Lead Level (BLL)	Recommended Actions For Primary Care Provider
< 10 µg/dL	This is an acceptable BLL. No action is necessary unless exposure sources change. Provide anticipatory guidance and assess for lead exposure risk at every well-child visit.
10-14 µg/dL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Retest in 3 months.Explain child’s lead level to parents.Educate family on lead sources and exposures.Assess nutritional status.Test siblings under 6 years of age.Provide lead education (for brochures call: 1-800-942-7434).
15-19 µg/dL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Follow same recommendations for venous BLL 10-14 µg/dL.Encourage family to accept home visit offered by the Family Outreach Program.
20-44 µg/dL	Child needs medical evaluation and treatment. You can refer for medical follow-up at: <ul style="list-style-type: none">St. Joseph’s Lead Clinic: 456-4310Memorial Hospital’s Lead Clinic: 729-2582
≥ 45 µg/dL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Follow same recommendations for venous BLL 20-44 µg/dL.If venous BLL screening is ≥ 45 µg/dL, repeat immediately as stat lab test. If test result is ≥ 45 µg/dL consider hospitalization.

Actions Taken by Rhode Island Department of Health

Blood Lead Level (BLL)	Actions Taken by the Rhode Island Department of Health
< 10 µg/dL (venous level)	This is an acceptable BLL. No action is necessary unless exposure sources change.
10-14 µg/dL (venous level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mail lead educational materials directly to parents.
15-19 µg/dL (venous level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mail lead educational materials directly to parents.Refer family to the Family Outreach Program for a free lead education home visit.
Persistent ≥ 15 µg/dL* (venous or fingerstick level) or 20-44 µg/dL (venous level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Refer for non-medical case management services provided by the Lead Center or the Family Outreach Program.Refer for environmental inspection. <p>* A persistent lead level is defined as 2 lead tests (venous or fingerstick) that are ≥ 15 µg/dL and at least 90 days apart but no more than 365 days apart.</p>
≥ 45 µg/dL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expedite a referral for non-medical case management services provided by the Lead Center or Family Outreach Program.Expedite a referral for environmental inspection.

Questions?

Call Patricia Raymond, RN,
Rhode Island Department of Health, (401) 222-5921.

Online Information

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program,
www.healthri.org/family/lead/home.htm
Rhode Island Department of Health, www.healthri.org

Other Resources

- Rhode Island Department of Health:
 - Division of Family Health..... 222-2312
 - Environmental Health..... 222-1417
 - Laboratory..... 222-5600
 - Family Health Information Line 1-800-942-7434
- Rhode Island Housing..... 751-5566
- Department of Environmental Management.... 222-1360
- Childhood Lead Action Project..... 785-1310

